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who will argue both sides of that question,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: ...whether they are or they aren't. Some people take...could take the absence of a specific prohibition or regulation to be a license.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator. Thank you, Senator Beutler. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion of the Brashear amendment, Senator Schrock, followed by Senator Mines. This will be your third time, Senator Schrock. He waives his opportunity. Senator Mines.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you, Mr. President, colleagues. Senator Chambers encouraged me to speak when he talked about telephone companies in Nebraska. I hadn't really intended to engage today. I am employed by a communications company, proudly employed by a communications company, and I think I need to make it very clear that some of the information that Senator Chambers was talking about doesn't apply to what I would...I hope you understand the difference between a local telephone company, a local communication company, and a long-distance communication company. There are about 40 local communication, or local telephone companies in Nebraska. Most of us are quite small. The company I work for has about 12,000 customers in eastern and northeastern Nebraska. Long-distance companies like MCI, Sprint, Qwest, they...our customers subscribe to them for their long distance. And Senator Chambers indicated he was upset that they have a base fee on long-distance service, and I want to assure everyone that has nothing to do with local telephone companies. Those are standards and marketing practices instituted by long-distance companies. But there are also many other fees that Senator Chambers brought up, on your local telephone bill, and I need everyone to understand that these aren't fees that local communication companies collect and keep. Local communication companies, in fact, are the tax collector for government fees and taxes. Just a few--we collect sales tax for the state sales tax; we collect a federal sales tax; we collect a local sales tax; we collect local occupation fees. These are all taxes that are then remitted back to local, state,